

Piaget's theory of cognitive moral development

[Sociology](#), [Moral Development](#)



In this brief exploration Acredolo takes a look into Piaget's new theory. He asserts that Piaget's new theory is difficult to understand but worth the time and effort to learn about and teach to students. He also argues that Piaget's new theory is actually a better theory and that in this day and age it should be taught as his main theory instead of just an add on to his previous theory. Acredolo explains that in his new theory, Piaget sets aside the stipulation that urgency be placed on early concrete operational milestones and instead be placed on that which surfaces late in the concrete operational period. He continues to explain that in the new theory, success that once was placed on certain tasks at the age of six are now seen as relatively modest while a substantial amount of interest is being placed on success of tasks at the age of ten. Although quite different in terms of the structure of Piaget's original theory, Acredolo states that there is plenty of data and strong theoretical justification for expecting structures at around age ten. He concludes that the suggestions of Piaget's new theory are new and thrilling and that importance should be placed on teaching this theory rather than his standard theory. This article brings curiosity to this new theory and invites the reader to study further.

Ojose, B. (2008). Applying Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development to Mathematics

Instruction. *The Mathematics Educator*, 18(1), 26-30. Retrieved September 01, 2010 from JSTOR database.

The purpose of this article was to apply developmentally appropriate mathematical concepts at each of the four stages of Piaget's theory of

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cognitive development. In the sensorimotor stage, Ojose states that using toys, fingers, and candy to help children count at age two or three will provide a strong base. In the second stage, the preoperational stage, teachers should utilize different objects to incorporate similar characteristics. Ojose suggests using manipulatives in the concrete operations stage to ensure children gain a strong assurance by being able to test and verify their own reasoning. Finally Ojose asserts that in the fourth stage, the formal operations stage, children have the ability to construct their own mathematics. This article is very interesting and informative especially for those individuals that are either in the field of education or studying to become involved with children and their education.

Bjorklund, D. F. (1997). In search of a Metatheory for Cognitive development (or, Piaget is Dead

And I Don't Feel so good Myself). *Child Development*, 68(1), 144-148.

Retrieved September 01, 2010 from JSTOR database.

In this examination, Bjorklund explains that psychologists today need to be brought together by a single focus, or metatheory. He brings forth that psychologists not rely on focuses of the past but rather bring the focus to the present and the future. Bjorklund suggests that the focus be placed not on cognitive development but instead on developmental biology and its correlation to evolutionary psychology. He states that psychologists should take into consideration the nervous system, the progression of intelligence in the species, and the species-typical background in which cognition emerged and develops. He states that even though mistakes may be made,

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researching cognitive development as a natural way to conform to solve problems, they will be able to make progress and retrieve better information. Although informative, this article speaks directly to other psychologists and people in related fields of study.

Korthals, M. (1992). Morality and Cooperation. *Journal of Moral Education*, 21(1), 17.

Retrieved from Religion and Philosophy Collection Database.

The author gives an overview of the two types of morality and two types of educational relation in Piaget's theory. Korthals states that the two types of morality are adult constraint and cooperation, each one being on the complete opposite end of the other with many different combinations in between. Adult constraint he mentions as being that of a unilateral respect in which a child is motivated to obey an adult. He gives an example of an older person saying what should be done and showing that they care about that child, therefore the child is obeying the adult. Cooperation is then the complete opposite and involves mutual respect in which both participants are motivated equally. Korthals example for this instance is the way two actors relate to and appreciate one another. He then goes on to tell of the two types of educational relation. The first being asymmetrical interaction which occurs in the first years. Korthals explains that the spontaneous and unconscious selfishness of a child brings forth moral realism. During this stage the child grasps the concept of rules and an obligation to follow them. The second stage is when autonomy is reached. According to Piaget, this is when one places themselves at equality with the child and tries to discuss

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rules and figure out why they are legitimate. The author is clear in discussing each of these points and correlating them to their dealings with parents, teachers and children.

Mallon, E. J. (1976). *Cognitive Development and Processes: Review of the Philosophy of Jean*

Piaget. *The American Biology teacher*, 38(1), 28-33. Retrieved September 01, 2010 from JSTOR database.

In this analysis, Mallon examines the correlation between Piaget's cognitive development and science education. She explains that there are three dimensions of experience that Piaget suggests may account for cognitive development. The first being social experience, second physical experience and last logico-mathematical experience. She points out that Piaget places strong emphasis on the physical experience. Mallon then goes on to clarify that in science a teacher that follows the direction of Piaget will ensure there students have many materials that are developmentally appropriate for each level that the students may be. She states that the science teacher must be ready to acquaint the students to the materials and experiences that are most beneficial at his or her present development stage. She explains that adolescence will not need quite as many materials as they may have come accustomed to in early years, because adolescence are more capable of figuring out certain things verbally and will not need a manipulative to assist them. Mallon states that it can be useful to have the students come up with a number of solutions and then test their predictions using objects. She adds that most adolescence are competent enough to handle complicated

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problems. She concludes that science teachers must allow this cognitive process to slowly develop and not be rushed. This is an excellent source for any science teacher looking for ways to improve their ability to aid in the development of children.

Kagan, J. (1980). Jean Piaget's Contributions. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 62(4), 245-246.

Retrieved September 01, 2010 from JSTOR database.

In this article, Kagan describes his views on what Piaget will be best remembered. He states that Piaget's ideas on formal operational thought are his best. He argues his point first by expressing his thought that it is unlikely that all an infant's knowledge is contained in the sensory motor schemes. He states that the power to discriminate and that memory recall in all modes oppose the explanation that relies on manipulation of the environment. Second, it has been suggested that important psychological changes occur at age seven. Kagan describes parents in Third world countries as giving their children responsibility and also the Catholic Church holds children responsible for their actions both of these occurring at age seven. He then states that the suggestion of a major cognitive restructuring occurring in adolescence is of enormous importance for comprehending this formal period of development. He continues with regard to the adolescent and states that at this age, they are more apt to finding their own independence and some of their independence does not coincide with their earlier presumptions therefore they must decide for themselves which they believe

is right for them. The author is clear in his ideas on the contributions of Piaget.

Walsh, K. (2008). Piaget's theory of Moral development. A Level Psychology Resources.

Retrieved September 01, 2010, from <http://alevelpsychology.co.uk>

In this brief article, Walsh describes Piaget's clinical interviews of children between the ages of five and thirteen. He closely relates Piaget's moral understanding research method to that of his cognitive development theory. Walsh describes in detail an example of an interview involving Piaget and the children he was studying. In this study, Piaget spoke of a child who was walking into a separate room and was unaware of fifteen cups that sat behind the door that he opened and knocked them all down, and another child who was trying to retrieve jelly from a cupboard using a stool while his mother was away and he knocked over one cup. During this case study Piaget found that children at the heteronomous phase, up to age ten, based which child did wrong by the amount of cups that was knocked over. Walsh then goes on to state that Piaget's findings showed the children above age ten were in the autonomous phase because they based their reasoning not on the amount of damage but on whose intentions were worse. This article was very brief, but very informative as to how Piaget held some of his case studies and his findings.

Hammer, C. (1981). Practical Piaget in the classroom. *The English Journal*, 70(7), 56-58.

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Retrieved September 01, 2010 from JSTOR database.

This article tells of the author and her fellow teachers study on their students. Hammer explains that she and her colleagues took a two hour block at their junior high school and grouped students not by their ability but instead by their conceptual level. They found that there were three stages that were evident. First was stage A in which the students were concrete in their thinking patterns. It was also evident that at this stage the students were often physical in response to name calling by their peers. The students at stage A had low self-control and frustration levels. Hammers next group was stage B, which included students that were still at the concrete level but were more apt to work in small groups and handle choices. They found that seventy to eighty percent of seventh graders were at this stage. The final stage was stage C. Stage C is when many students begin to see themselves different from others. They are more apt to focus on themselves and not take into consideration others thoughts. At this stage hammer and her colleagues found it better to allow these students to work alone and be their own individual. This is a very good study and offers a developmentally appropriate way to separate students to gain maximum amount of student cooperation and also the best possible way to allow all children to learn in their own comfort zone.